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Follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly: general overview and progress achieved in meeting the goals and targets for the years 2003 and 2008 set out in the Political Declaration adopted by the Assembly at its twentieth special session

Follow-up to the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

In its resolution 56/124 of 19 December 2001, entitled "International cooperation against the world drug problem", the General Assembly requested the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-fifth session on the follow-up to the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development. In its resolution 44/11 entitled "International cooperation on the elimination of illicit drug crops and on alternative development", the Commission called for measures to eliminate illicit drug crops and drew attention to the special importance of international cooperation in alternative development to support national efforts to eliminate such crops. The Commission requested the Executive Director to report on the implementation of its resolution at its forty-fifth session. The present report has been prepared in compliance with those requests.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly at its twentieth special session, devoted to countering the world drug problem together, adopted the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development. The Action Plan focused on, inter alia: the need for a balanced approach to confront high levels of illicit cultivation; the strengthening of international cooperation for alternative development; the improvement of innovative approaches to alternative development; the enhancement of monitoring, evaluation and information-sharing; and the need for law enforcement in controlling illicit crops. It also urged the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the international community to assist States in countering illicit drug production by providing adequate financial and technical assistance for alternative development, with the aim of reducing and eventually eliminating illicit drug crops. UNDCP was also called upon to continue to play a catalytic role in assisting Governments in approaching international financial institutions for financing and in supporting their alternative development programmes and projects. In its resolution 56/124 of 19 December 2001, entitled "International cooperation against the world drug problem", the General Assembly requested the Executive Director of UNDCP to report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-fifth session on the follow-up to the Action Plan. The present report is submitted to the Commission in response to that request.

2. The Commission, in its resolution 44/11 entitled "International cooperation on the elimination of illicit drug crops and on alternative development", called on Member States, multilateral financial institutions and regional development banks, UNDCP and the international community, including regional organizations, to take specific action in supporting the implementation of the Action Plan. The Commission requested the Executive Director to report to it at its forty-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is also submitted to the Commission in compliance with that request.

3. The attention of the Commission is drawn to the consolidated first biennial report of the Executive Director on action taken by Governments to implement the action plans and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session (E/CN.7/2001/16), which the Commission considered at its reconvened forty-fourth session in December 2001. That report contains an assessment of progress made by Governments in implementing the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development.

II. Latin America and the Caribbean

4. To implement the Action Plan, UNDCP continued to support Governments affected by the illicit cultivation of narcotic crops by delivering alternative development programmes in Bolivia, Colombia and Peru within the framework of the three business plans for the elimination of illicit drug crops through alternative development. During the biennium 2000-2001, UNDCP implemented 14 alternative development projects totalling 51 million United States dollars ($), with an additional $20 million being delivered to support such projects. UNDCP allocations for alternative development in each of the three States accounted for 75 per cent of the total.

5. The UNDCP strategy is to support the rapid reduction of illicit coca cultivation in Bolivia through the Chapare agroforestry programme, within the framework of the business plan for Bolivia. In the Chapare region, the project has provided assistance to 1,560 families organized in 71 producers' associations and 16 women's groups. In addition, agroforestry systems have been established over an area of 120 hectares, and environmentally compatible forest management plans now cover over 5,700 hectares. Furthermore, a Forestry Technical Centre has been established with project support and has been increasingly assuming planning and coordination functions with regard to the management of forest resources. In late 2000, project activities were expanded to the Yungas region of La Paz. A project for the Yungas, started in mid-2001, is assisting in the establishment of a monitoring system for land use, including coca cultivation in the region. As a complement to agroforestry, a vocational training programme was initiated in the Chapare in late 2000. The programme aimed at providing training to 8,500 people between the ages of 15 and 34, creating 160 microenterprises. During a first project phase,

agreements have been signed with various Bolivian training organizations that provided specialized vocational courses for more than 2,600 people. In cooperation with the private sector, the integration of the trainees into the labour market was promoted. At the national level, UNDCP supported the process of integrating coordinated alternative development planning into the national planning system at the national, regional and municipal levels.

6. Under the business plan for Colombia, support was provided to the National Alternative Development Plan (PLANTE) to develop and implement productive projects jointly with the municipalities and organizations of farmers in seven departments. Eight organizations of farmers with more than 3,000 associated families were supported in production and marketing. Each organization has signed an agreement with farmers to eliminate illicit crops, and in return to support agricultural and livestock activities. Marketing agreements were negotiated with the private sector. Also, in the departments of Meta and Caquetá, more than 60 families have received cattle through a revolving fund. In that area, UNDCP also supports the World Health Organization (WHO) with the provision of basic health services and safe drinking water and of equipment to rural pharmacies. A new project has started in the departments of Caquetá and Nariño aimed at the promotion of dual-purpose cattle-breeding. Five hundred families will receive cattle as a loan in kind, and 1,000 families will receive support in agroforestry systems and food crops. UNDCP also continued its support to Colombia in establishing a monitoring system for illicit crops that enables the identification and quantification of illicit coca and opium poppy cultivation. The relevant figures for the year 2000 have already been published.

7. Under the business plan for Peru, alternative development has covered 5 of the 11 major coca-growing areas in Peru, namely, the valleys of Apurimac, Lower Huallaga, Pichis-Palcazú, Aguaytia and Inambari-Tambopata. UNDCP technically and financially supported the production and marketing of traditional crops, including coffee and cacao, as well as the building up of capital-intensive agro-industrial activities, such as the production of palm oil and palm heart. Furthermore, improved cattle-breeding was supported. In the remote areas, UNDCP support was crucial for rural infrastructure, especially feeder roads to markets. Assistance was delivered through 14 organizations of farmers reaching 7,760 families. Additional alternative development products have been sold to specialized markets in Europe and the United States of America. In view of the prevailing rural poverty in the coca-growing areas, social issues have been increasingly addressed and efforts have continued to ensure a higher participation of women in the various project activities and organizations.

III. South-east Asia and the Pacific

8. UNDCP provided support for alternative development to the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam. In addition, technical assistance was provided in conducting opium-poppy ground surveys in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and in Myanmar. UNDCP also continued to facilitate the sharing of good practices and discussion of common problems in the field of alternative development. A major report and book were published highlighting lessons learned in reducing opium poppy cultivation in Thailand during the period from 1970 to 2000, and a new interactive web site on alternative development in East Asia was launched by the regional centre in Bangkok in late 2001.

9. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is fully committed to its national strategy for the elimination of opium poppy. The original target year for the elimination of opium poppy cultivation, 2006, was advanced to 2005. Equally important, drug control is fully integrated with broader poverty alleviation programmes in the country. In that context, UNDCP works closely with other international organizations within the United Nations system and with the Asian Development Bank, as well as with several bilateral donors. In support of the opium elimination strategy, the joint government-UNDCP Programme Facilitation Unit, which started working in late 2000, has formulated detailed proposals for a number of programme modules. The package of proposals will be presented to potential donors during a joint visit to several European capitals, scheduled for early 2002.

10. According to the national opium survey for 2001, 17,255 hectares are under opium poppy cultivation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, with a reduction of 36 per cent since 1998. Potential production is estimated at 134 tons. Alternative

development has proven to be a feasible option, producing concrete results. In fact, most of the reduction in the area of opium poppy cultivation was achieved in those provinces in which alternative development activities exist. UNDCP-supported alternative development projects are under way in the following opium-poppy-growing areas: the Beng district in Oudomxai province; the Nam Ham and Nam Ven districts in Houaphan province; and the Nonghet district in Xieng Khouang province. The main activities include: capacity-building for community-based development planning; small-scale basic sanitation and irrigation schemes; agricultural diversification; livestock development; income-generating activities; improvement of feeder roads; drug abuse prevention and rehabilitation work; and basic health education.

11. With the application of the ban on opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan in 2001, Myanmar was the largest single source of opium production in 2001. Increased assistance is required to achieve additional major reductions in cultivation in the country.

12. During the period from 1996 to 1999, opium poppy cultivation in Myanmar declined by 38 per cent, increasing slightly in 2000, and stabilizing in 2001 at about 1,100 tons. To date, drug control and alternative development assistance have been very limited. Myanmar has very limited access to official development assistance, which is restricted to humanitarian assistance, and does not benefit from assistance from the international financial institutions. In that context, United Nations bodies operating in Myanmar have agreed on the following three priority areas for consultation with the international community and common action: human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) prevention, illicit drugs and food security.

13. In 2001, activities of the ongoing Wa alternative development project in Myanmar have been concentrated on fewer villages, and in just two geographical areas: Nam Lwi (including the township of Mong Hpen) and Nam Naw (including the township of Mong Pawk). The project applies the concept of participatory community development, with bottom-up planning and full participation of the villagers. Given the reduced level of funding, the 2001 work plan also reflected significant reductions in both project activities and staff. Project activities in 2001 included primary health-care activities; a child immunization programme; small-scale water supply schemes; feeder-road construction; promotion of high-yield rice production; livestock development and other income-generating activities. In addition, the project has established a strong management, data collection and monitoring component, including socio-economic field surveys, poppy monitoring and yields surveys, and geographical and management information systems. A project revision was approved in December 2001, formalizing an overall reduction in the project total cost and duration to reflect funding limits.

14. As a result of eradication efforts during the 1990s, Viet Nam is no longer a major opium producer. Following the successful conclusion of the first phase of the Ky Son alternative development project in central Viet Nam, a second phase was approved in late 2001. The new project will address sustainability concerns and develop replicable methodologies for the establishment of opium income substitution and drug demand reduction activities among opium-producing ethnic minorities. That will be achieved by strengthening the capacity of the national institutions responsible for delivering the required services, in cooperation with community-based development planning. Provincial and district authorities will play key roles, and the transfer of experience in alternative development technology and use will facilitate its application in other government rural development initiatives.

15. Periodic recultivation of opium poppy in areas from which it had previously been eradicated has occurred in some remote areas of Viet Nam, leading UNDCP, together with the Government, to launch a second alternative development project in the Song Ma district of Song La, a province in northern Viet Nam. The project is designed to address the problem of opium recultivation and drug abuse, by creating sustainable alternative means of livelihood. That will be achieved through a participatory approach. The project will approach the issues of both opium supply and drug demand by addressing underlying determinants such as poverty, health, household drug dependency, income opportunities, socio-economic development, and the capacity of communities to address those issues. Best practices from recently concluded UNDCP projects in Viet Nam will be applied. The project will also draw on and complement

the activities of the European Commission project in Song Ma.

IV. South-west Asia

A. Afghanistan

16. In Afghanistan, a ban on poppy cultivation, imposed by the Taliban in July 2000, was effectively implemented in 2001. That was confirmed by a donor mission to former opium-growing areas in Afghanistan, organized by UNDCP in April/May 2001. As a result, poppy cultivation in 2001 was reduced by approximately 94 per cent compared to the year 2000. The 2001 survey estimates the national production of raw opium at 185 tons cultivated over an area of 7,606 hectares. Following the events of 11 September 2001, UNDCP has received anecdotal reports of a resumption of poppy cultivation in the traditional poppy-growing areas of Helmand, Nangarhar, Oruzgan and Kandahar.

17. An alternative development project under the UNDCP pilot programme for Afghanistan was implemented from March 1997 to December 2000 in four target districts of Nangarhar and Kandahar provinces. The project had to be closed prematurely as a result of a lack of funding. The project has successfully assisted many farmers in the target areas to build up sustainable alternative livelihoods. Activities in infrastructure rehabilitation to secure the water supply for income generation through agricultural production, marketing of products and interventions in the area of social improvement were aimed at helping the communities to rebuild the basis of their economy by creating an attractive socio-economic environment. Agricultural activities supported farmers in the cultivation of improved crops, in order to encourage them to give up illicit opium poppy cultivation in favour of licit sources of income.

18. In response to the effective implementation of the Taliban opium poppy ban in 2001, and with a view to supporting its sustainability, UNDCP launched a project in Nangarhar province in August 2001 for the provision of agricultural inputs and food-for-work schemes to former opium-poppy-cultivating areas. The events of 11 September 2001 brought an abrupt halt to that new initiative. UNDCP has continued to be actively involved in inter-agency cooperation and coordination programmes related to Afghanistan, in order to ensure the incorporation of drug control objectives as a cross-cutting theme in the assistance programmes for Afghanistan provided by other agencies and in the post-conflict reconstruction of the country.

B. Pakistan

19. Pakistan has made a commitment to the international community to be poppy-free by the year 2000. That goal has essentially been achieved, in spite of resurgence of some opium poppy cultivation in the Khyber Agency of North-West Frontier Province bordering Nangarhar province in Afghanistan. Poppy has, however, been eliminated in the traditional opium-poppy-growing areas of Dir district and the tribal areas of Mohmand and Bajaur.

20. UNDCP has been implementing an alternative development project in Dir district of North-West Frontier Province, in particular in the Nehag valley, since 1985. The second phase of the project, which has been ongoing since 1994, is currently being terminated. The project activities included infrastructure development, the creation of alternative crop regimes, raising the productivity of existing crops, forestry development, soil conservation and the provision of training to develop off-farm skills, as well as health initiatives. As a result of the project activities and the eradication efforts of the Government of Pakistan, Dir district became poppy-free in 2000. During the current season, farmers were tempted to sow poppy again because of an extraordinary set of circumstances. The extremely high price of opium gum since the enforcement of the ban on cultivation in Afghanistan by the Taliban and the fledgling state of the new district governments at the local level were the main reasons.

21. The recently concluded terminal evaluation of the UNDCP Dir district development project (DDDP) determined that the project had successfully achieved its objective of eliminating opium poppy cultivation in the target area. However, the report recommends "a consolidation phase of DDDP to be implemented over sufficient time to protect the real gains of the project". The report also recommends that "the Government of Pakistan publicly affirm their determination to maintain the poppy-free status of Dir district by making a public statement in the area and putting in

place clear and unequivocal arrangements for the eradication of any poppy planted during the 2001-2002 season".

22. Early reports from Dir district in the current planting season (2001/2002) suggest that up to 500 hectares have been planted in 11 valleys of the district. UNDCP is continuing its advocacy with the Government and maintaining pressure at the level of the provincial authorities to ensure appropriate action to achieve a zero poppy harvest in Dir district in 2002. The Governor of the North-West Frontier Province issued a public notice to farmers stating that the Government will not tolerate any opium poppy cultivation. Any poppy planted will be destroyed by the Government.

V. Central Asia

23. While there is hardly any significant opium poppy cultivation in central Asia, there is an abundance of wild growth of cannabis. The authorities of the five central Asian States carry out annual campaigns of eradication (so-called black poppy operations) of both opium poppy and cannabis, although precise estimates of the eradicated areas are not available.

24. The main concern in the field of drug cultivation and production is the possibility that the drastic decrease in opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan in 2001 would trigger a significant increase in opium poppy cultivation in central Asia (the so-called balloon effect). Central Asia has the potential in terms of favourable climatic conditions and geographic terrain, a vulnerable development situation, existing opium cultivation and a past with major licit production of opium for pharmaceutical purposes. The situation warrants continuous monitoring of actual and potential opium poppy cultivation areas in the region.

25. Assistance rendered by the Office for Drug Control and Crime prevention of the Secretariat to the central Asian States in the elimination of illicit crops includes the 1997-2000 project "Mapping the extent of illicit poppy cultivation in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan", which involved the following: the development of a methodology for the mapping of opium and cannabis cultivation; comprehensive knowledge of such cultivation in selected areas of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan; and acquisition by the concerned authorities of the skills required to carry out such surveys on their own. Assistance was also provided in the development of an environmentally safe and reliable biological control agent for opium poppy under the 1998-2001 project "Research and development of an environmentally safe and reliable biological control agent for opium poppy".

VI. The Middle East

26. The Office for Drug Control and Crime prevention has maintained long-standing cooperation with the Government of Lebanon in the area of alternative development aimed at eliminating the cultivation of illicit crops. The assistance is provided by UNDCP, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) the United Nations Office for Project Services and other relevant bodies.

27. During the 1970s and 1980s, Lebanon was the major producer of illicit drugs in the Middle East. Cultivation of illicit crops started in Lebanon on an increasing scale in the district of Baalbek and Hermel in the northern Bekaa valley. After the outbreak of civil war in 1975, illicit cultivation expanded, reaching its peak with cannabis cultivation estimated as high as 11,000 to 16,000 hectares, yielding up to 1,000 tons of cannabis resin per year, during the late 1980s. Illicit opium poppy cultivation, which began during the 1980s, rapidly grew from 3,500 to 5,000 hectares, yielding 30 to 50 tons (3-5 tons of heroin).

28. During the period from 1991 to 1993, the Lebanese and Syrian forces started eradicating illicit cultivation in the Bekaa valley. While significantly reducing the cultivation of opium poppy and cannabis, the eradication campaigns were not, however, integrated into a wider programme to address the socio-economic conditions in the Bekaa valley and to limit the loss of income for the affected communities. Eradication in the absence of alternative income sources thus had an immediate negative economic impact on the population.

29. UNDCP has so far completed three operations amounting to $5.584 million in Lebanon, and is currently completing two ongoing projects, the bigger of which is the second phase of the Baalbek-Hermel Regional Development Programme ($1.854 million). A

second complementary multisectoral project ($210,000) was signed in May 1999 and started implementation in August 1999. The project includes the provision of equipment for the law enforcement agency, the establishment of a licit control system and the conducting of a rapid assessment study on the extent and patterns of drug abuse in Lebanon. Further assistance to Lebanon will form part of the subregional drug control programme envisaged by UNDCP for the Middle East.

30. In 1994, UNDCP and UNDP started to support development in the Bekaa valley as part of a wider infrastructure and development programme of the Government of Lebanon for the Bekaa valley. The major achievements of phase I are as follows: establishing a revolving credit scheme to address cash flow problems of farmers; setting up a network of local development and credit committees to build up a participatory structure; rehabilitation of water supply systems for Baalbek and expansion of the agricultural irrigation scheme; establishing agricultural extension and research facilities and supporting the pilot alternative crop cultivation scheme; rehabilitation and equipping of the government hospital in Hermel; training of nurses in primary and advanced health care; and provision of alternative income for women through handicraft cooperatives. Phase II of the rural development programme has resulted in the following achievements: maintaining and enhancement of the credit scheme; integration of the development and credit committees and other stakeholders in an enhanced participatory development planning process; start-up of operations at the primary health care centres in Aarsal, Nabi Shit, Chmistar and Deir Ahmar and support to the public hospitals in Baalbek and Hermel; implementation of an education programme including awareness-raising activities in 20 high schools; organizing a youth work camp with 60 participants, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations and the municipalities of El-Ain, Labwe, Zabboud, Bajjaje and Jabboule; computer training for 210 students for 18 months; provision of vocational training for 50 school drop-outs; literacy courses for 400 adults; support provided to local women's non-governmental organizations in handicraft production and food-processing.

31. Those substantive achievements have improved both living standards and the income opportunities of the population in the Bekaa valley. However, given the scale of the problems at hand and the required funds, the interventions of the first two phases have remained insufficient to generate sustained development of the Baalbek-Hermel region. Consequently, the poorest strata of society were reported to be resorting to the cultivation of illicit crops to complement their insufficient income.

32. UNDCP has therefore designed a further programme to address the socio-economic conditions in the Bekaa valley. The programme, which is currently awaiting funding, aims at achieving sustained and successful eradication of illicit crops in the Bekaa valley and preventing the recurrence of such cultivation in the north-western Bekaa valley.